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PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION OF PEDAGOGIC UTILITY OF THE ARCHIVE OF HISPANIC LITERATURE ON TAPE. FINAL REPORT.

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A STUDY WAS CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE THE POSSIBLE PEDAGOGICAL UTILIZATION OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS ARCHIVE OF HISPANIC LITERATURE ON TAPE WHICH CONTAINS, AS OF JUNE 1962, ORIGINAL RECORDINGS IN SPANISH, PORTUGUESE, CATALAN, AND FRENCH OF THE VOICES OF 218 WRITERS READING SOME 2,800 LITERARY WORKS. PROCEDURES TAKEN TO ENCOURAGE LONG-TERM UTILITY OF THE ARCHIVE INCLUDED DESCRIBING, TRANSCRIBING, AND CLASSIFYING ALL THE ITEMS, PREPARING REFERENCE COPIES OF ALL MASTER TAPES, REVIEWING INVENTORIES, AND SETTING UP A FULLY INDEXED WORKING GUIDE TO THE ARCHIVE. IN ADDITION, AN INQUIRY WAS MADE TO WHICH 96 SPECIALISTS REPRESENTING 77 INSTITUTIONS RESPONDED, INDICATING THEIR INTEREST IN THE PROJECT. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY SUGGEST THAT THE ARCHIVE CAN BE A HIGHLY USEFUL RESOURCE FOR TEACHING LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS, AND PUBLIC USE IS ENCOURAGED. (SS)

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FINAL REPORT

on

Preliminary Determination of Pedagogic Utility

of the

Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape

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by

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OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Introduction

In June 1962, the U.S. Office of Education transferred the sum of $15,450 to the Library of Congress to enable the Hispanic Foundation of the Reference Department to organize the Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape and to conduct a study concerning its pedagogic utility. The following is a Final Report of activities and results of this project.

Background

The Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape is a collection of original recordings of the voices of contemporary writers from Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula. The Archive dates from November 23, 1943 when, in the course of a visit to Washington, D.C., the late Andrés Eloy Blanco, the Venezuelan poet, consented to record some of his poems for the Library of Congress. Additional recordings slowly were added to the Archive during the next 15 years, funded by Hispanic Foundation gift and trust fund incomes. In 1957 it was decided to accelerate in a systematic fashion development of the Archive. The Rockefeller Foundation provided support over a three year period from 1958. In 1958, Francisco Aguilera, Curator of the Archive, utilizing these grant funds, visited a number of the Hispanic countries and acquired Some 68 additional records. In 1960 and again in 1961, the Curator made a second and third trip to Latin America for the purpose of acquiring additional recordings by significant writers. These trips substantially contributed to an effective building up of the Archive, which as of June 1962

contained recordings in Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, and French of the voices of 218 writers reading some 2800 literary pieces. Subsequently a few recordings were added when major figures visited the Library of Congress.

Purposes of the Investigation

The general purpose of this project was to study the possible educational utilization of the Archive. This was a long-standing need, as educators had been inquiring about its educational possibilities soon after the existence of the Archive became known. The specific objectives of this specific Office of Education project were -

1. To complete the description of the individual items in the Archive (poems, essays, chapters of novels, etc.);

2. To prepare for each literary item a transcribed text;

3. To have each text classified on a predetermined scale of linguistic and conceptual difficulty for students;

4. To gather basic professional and general recommendations on the possible utility of material in the Archive for classroom teaching.

Work Procedures and Research Design

Under the general supervision of the Curator and his assistant, Mrs. Elsa López McGuire, a special staff was employed to carry out the objectives of the project.

For purposes of the investigation and the long-term utility of the Archive, reference copies of all master tapes were prepared

in the Recording Laboratory of the Library of Congress. In all some 380 reference tapes were duplicated and an additional set for individual authors was prepared and distributed to them. The reference tapes were placed in a special alcove in the Hispanic Society Room in labeled boxes, where they will be available for public use when the Archive is opened to the general public, pending completion of a detailed descriptive Guide to the Archive being prepared by Mr. Aguilera.

Mrs. McGuire and the various assistants employed on the project completed detailed descriptions of all of the individual items in the Archive. This involved reviewing inventories made in previous years, playing all of the tapes involved, making corrections, and completing data on each item.

Concurrently with completing the inventory, staff members, wherever possible, acquired a photocopy of the printed literary text of the items recorded on tape. These materials were placed in a separate binder for each author. This phase of the project was completed by the end of calendar year 1962.

To facilitate the professional study of the Archive, the Curator selected 158 authors reading their works in Spanish, from the total of 197 such readings in Spanish, for this special inquiry. (The 39 writers not included in the selection have been reserved for future study on the basis of pedagogical considerations). The Curator subsequently prepared a definitive listing of all 1412 compositions of the 158 authors chosen. This list was multilithed as a working guide entitled <u>Selected Authors and their Readings</u>

(Spanish) in the Library of Congress Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape (1962). A companion index was prepared, with subdivisions on verse, prose, genre, topics, and individuals as subjects, for use in conjunction with the above described guidebook. Copies of both of these working tools were submitted to the Office of Education in 1963. At its request the Hispanic Foundation distributed copies to selected specialists, along with an inquiry about possible use in their classrooms, herewith described.

Professional Evaluation

The services of Dr. Harvey L. Johnson (Indiana University) and Dr. John M. Fein (Duke University) as special consultants were obtained to evaluate selected recordings. Professors Johnson and Fein, after examining the text and listening to the recordings, independently graded the various compositions on a simple scale. Professors Johnson and Fein also provided brief reports on their evaluation of the Archive in which they strongly endorsed the use of the Archive as an excellent resource for pedagogic use. Copies of these reports were submitted to the Office of Education as attachments to Progress Report and Status of the Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape,. dated June 30, 1963.

As a further step in evaluating the possibilities of the pedagogic utility of the Archive, the Director of the Hispanic Foundation forwarded on February 27, 1963, to a selected list of 127 specialists in universities, research organizations, and related institutions, a letter setting forth the general nature of the Archive and enclosing copies of the guidebook and index noted above, in addition to a detailed inquiry. The latter was drawn

to elicit from teachers and others their views on the manner in which tape materials might best be employed to improve or supplement present teaching aids. A total of 96 individuals representing 77 institutions replied to the questionnaires. Almost all respondents to the inquiry indicated their interest in the project and their high opinion on the potentialities of the Archive for teaching purposes. The results of this survey have been compiled in an additional Report on the Pedagogic Utility of the Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape by Dr. John M. Fein.

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED FOR THIS PROJECT

1. Progress Report and Status of the Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape, June 30, 1963. Prepared by Francisco Aguilera, Curator, and Mrs. Elsa López McGuire.

2. Report on the Pedagogic Utility of the Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape, May 25, 1964. Prepared by John M. Fein, Consultant to the Hispanic Foundation.

3. Selected Authors and their Readings (Spanish) in the Library of Congress Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape, 1962. Prepared by Francisco Aguilera, Curator.

4. Index of Genres and Topics to the Readings of Selected Authors from the Library of Congress Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape, 1962. Prepared by Francisco Aguilera, Curator.

Conclusions

All of the objectives of this project have been achieved and this study clearly revealed that the Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape constitutes a highly useful resource for teaching purposes in the fields of literature and linguistics.

A second major finding of the project, resulting from the survey of the teaching profession, is that there is a need for a published scholarly guide to the material in the Archive prior to its availability for public use.

The Curator of the Archive has subsequently undertaken the preparation of such a guide, on funds provided by the Library of Congress.

Upon publication of the "Guide to the Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape," the Library of Congress will open the Archive to public use, and further determinations of its use for preparation of classroom materials can be undertaken.